

Message Text

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ACTION PPT-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-07 ISO-00 SY-05 FBIE-00 SCA-01 DHA-02

/029 W

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R 170500Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6453

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VIENTIANE 1159

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR SHUM CA AS UK LA

SUBJECT: CUSO VOLUNTEER EXPELLED

1. THE GOVERNMENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC ON MAY 15 EXPELLED MISS MEGAN JONES, A DUAL BRITISH-AUSTRALIAN CITIZEN WHO HAD BEEN IN LAOS FOR SEVERAL YEARS AS A VOLUNTEER IN THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT'S CUSO PROGRAM. MISS JONES, WHO HAD WORKED AS A PHYSICAL THERAPIST FOR CHILDREN AT THE ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL, HAD ON MAY 12 ENGAGED IN A HEATED DISCUSSION ABOUT LAOS WITH SOUBANH SRITHIRATH, CHEF DE CABINET OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY. DURING THE DISCUSSION, WHICH TOOK PLACE AT A BRITISH EMBASSY PARTY, MISS JONES REPORTEDLY CATALOGUED HER CRITICISMS OF COMMUNIST RULE HERE AND SOUBANH IS REPORTED OT HAVE TOLD HERE THAT HE COULD HAVE HER EXPELLED. MISS JONES IS SUPPOSED TO HAVE REPLIED, "YOU WOULDN'T DARE."

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2. THE AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY RECEIVED A NOTE FROM THE

FOREIGN MINISTRY ON THE MORNING OF MAY 14 ORDERING MISS JONES TO LEAVE WITHING 48 HOURS. WE ARE INFORMED THAT SHE LEFT VIA THA DEUA ON THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 15.

3. COMMENT: NO ONE HAS EVER ACCUSED SOUBANH OF BEING A NICE GUY, BUT THIS EXPULSION COINCIDES WITH THE APPARENT START OF A LARGER PROGRAM BY THE LPDR TO RID LAOS OF STRAY FOREIGNERS. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY HAS RECENTLY PUBLISHED A NOTICE, BEING REPORTED SEPARATELY, ANNOUNCING THAT THE GOVERNMENT WILL NOT RENEW THE TWO MOST WIDELY HELD CATEGORIES OF RESIDENCE PERMITS FOR FOREIGNERS IN LAOS.
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